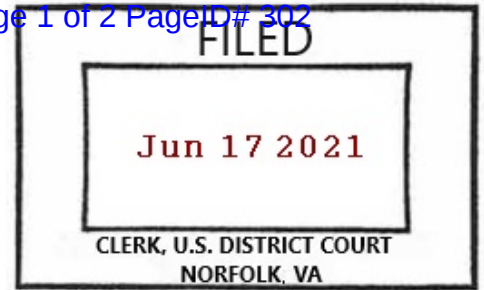


UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA



In re:
COURT OPERATIONS UNDER THE EXIGENT
CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY THE OUTBREAK
OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019
(COVID-19): EXCEPTION TO SUSPENSION OF
IN-PERSON NATURALIZATION CEREMONIES

Case No. 2:20mc7

General Order No. 2021-08

On March 13, 2020, the President declared a national emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since that time, this Court has issued various General Orders relating to Court operations during the pandemic which, among other things, suspended in-person naturalization ceremonies until further notice, with naturalizations for individuals that are not pursuing a name change currently being handled administratively by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services ("USCIS"). See General Order 2020-16. This Court has waived exclusive jurisdiction for the Norfolk/Richmond/Newport News Divisions with respect to non-name change naturalizations through August 31, 2021, with the Court continuing to perform name change naturalizations virtually.

At the request of the Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, the undersigned judge **GRANTS** an exception to the suspension of in-person naturalization ceremonies to allow the Chief Judge, with the cooperation of USCIS, to administer the Oath of Citizenship to a small gathering of new citizens on July 4, 2021, on the grounds of the Virginia Museum of

History and Culture. Because of the ongoing pandemic, the July 4, 2021 naturalization ceremony will not be open to the public and will instead be accessible to the public via Internet live-streaming.

It is so ORDERED.

/s/ 

Mark S. Davis

CHIEF UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

Norfolk, Virginia

June 17, 2021